The North American Network of Science Labs Online (NANSLO) represents an international collaborative partnership between postsecondary institutions in the U.S. and Canada. Funded initially by a grant from EDUCAUSE through the Next Generation Learning Challenges, NANSLO adopted and furthered the development of openly licensed online science courseware in biology, physics, and chemistry and replicated a Canadian innovation known as Remote Web-Based Science Laboratory (RWSL). RWSL makes use of software, live video and robotics that facilitate the remote manipulation of lab equipment. The robotics and live video allows students the opportunity to engage in actual science experiments in fully equipped labs 24 hours a day from rural and urban settings alike.

NANSLO has the potential to deepen student engagement in online science courses and enable more students, especially those who find it difficult to take classes on campus, to persist in science-related programs. NANSLO may expand access and address persistence barriers by offering quality alternatives to gatekeeper and other science courses offered in traditional classroom settings.

NANSLO partners contribute Advisory Board oversight and membership in expert discipline panels who collaborate together in the development of lab experiments using the NANSLO curriculum. Partners include the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), Colorado Community College System (CCCS), BCCampus—a consortium of 25 post-secondary institutions in British Columbia (BC), Canada, Colorado School of Mines, University of Wyoming, Montana State University, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology and Laramie County Community College.

NANSLO to Support Consortium for Healthcare Education Online (CHEO)

NANSLO will participate in a new project called the Consortium for Healthcare Education Online (CHEO) funded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAAACCCT) grant program for four years. The $14,171,229 project is headed by Pueblo Community College and is funded to develop or transition identified allied healthcare courses and programs into hybrid and/or online formats. These programs—some which will be new and others currently provided in the face-to-face format only—will offer students the opportunity to acquire stackable certificates, allowing them to make continuous progress in their profession as working adults while pursuing their academic credentials. CHEO partners will make use of NANSLO course material, and will work with NANSLO to create new RWSL lab experiments. CHEO faculty will have access to RWSL equipment, and an expanded RWSL lab site at North Island College in British Columbia.

CHEO Partners

NANSLO will work closely with the following partners: Pueblo Community College (CO), Kodiak College (AK), Otero Junior College (CO), Red Rocks Community College (CO), Montana State University Great Falls (MT), Flathead Valley Community College (MT), Laramie County Community College (WY), Lake Area Technical Institute (SD).

CHEO Allied Healthcare Programs

Partners are developing or putting online certificate programs in areas such as: emergency medical services, polysomnography, health information technology, medical lab technology, nurse aid (with special certificates for home health care, hospice care, and medication aide), pre-nursing, paramedicine, radiation technology, health information technology, and medical lab technician.

Project Outcomes in Addition to Course Development

The four-year project is designed to provide two categories of services. CHEO will support faculty members who are learning to make use of online environments for course and program delivery while also ensuring that certificate programs meet the needs of a diverse student body. CHEO will also provide services dedicated to supporting students from enrollment through employment. Services include:

- A new NANSLO node at Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology will serve students enrolled in courses developed in the CHEO project at MSU and three other participating institutions: Flathead Valley Community College (MT), Lake Area Technical Institute (LATI), and Laramie County Community College.
- The NANSLO node at North Island College (British Columbia) will be expanded for use by RWSL developers and CHEO faculty. It will also support students participating in lab courses at Kodiak College (AK).
- The NANSLO discipline panels will grow to include representatives from CHEO institutions for collaborative development of new lab exercises for allied health courses.
- Each institution will hire a Career Coach to support students from recruitment through their job search.
- CHEO members will participate in professional development activities including annual workshops and webinars on best practices in career coaching, designing and teaching science courses in online and hybrid environments, and the most effective use of RWSL in lab exercises.
- A regional web-based career resource will build awareness about the CHEO partners’ allied health programs and include many robust tools to help students in their academic and career pursuits.
- Software will be developed to support NANSLO’s multi-campus use of its RWSL nodes and will facilitate financial transactions associated with individual campus use.

For more information about NANSLO, contact

Pat Shea, Director, Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
3035 Center Green Drive, Suite 200, Boulder, CO 80301
pshea@wiche.edu • 303.541.0302 • www.wiche.edu/nanslo